

JUDGE JOHN L. T. SNEED

EXPRESSES HIS VIEWS ON THE
TARIFF QUESTION.An Able and Exhaustive Paper
Which Deserves to Be Care-
fully Read.

To the Editors of the Appeal:

The generous terms of your columns to present in this form my reply to an inquiry by your distinguished senior as to my views on tariff reform, is most gratefully appreciated. As a private citizen my opinions upon public questions are certainly of no special interest to the people; but as an aspirant for a seat in the Senate of the United States, where private opinions may assume a practical shape, either salutary or detrimental to the popular weal, they become public property, and whatever may be the effect of a candid avowal of my own, I am content to stand or fall by them.

A philosopher of old divided mankind into three classes. The first class think for themselves; the second think as others do; and the third do not think at all. It is certainly true that there are men who never change an opinion, never correct an error. Yet of all men in a popular government, the most useful counselor is he who makes a sort of pendulum of his opinions, and without invoking his own honest reflection, vacillates from right to left and left to right, to follow the popular breeze or the theory of some accredited tribune of the people. If all men belonged to the first class referred to by the philosopher, it seems to me there could be but one opinion in this country upon the subject of tariff reform. It was an observation of Mr. Clay that a perfect tariff system is an impossibility, and he who is expecting it will never see it. But, said he, where upon it turns out that our sin provokes the tariff operate harshly upon certain interests, they ought to be promptly modified, and no one, he continued, would co-operate more cheerfully than myself in readjusting it, so that absolute justice should be done.

IT IS A GREAT MISTAKE to suppose that the old commoner ever favored that sort of protection which either fostered monopoly or builds up one industry at the expense of another. His theory was so to adjust customs duties as to protect all our infant industries while they were crawling; but when they have acquired vigor enough to stand and walk without help, then to let them severally alone under such incidental protection as is inseparable from every revenue tariff. He was always afraid of surplus revenues lying idle in the Treasury, because they became a perilous temptation to extravagance, speculation and corruption. He was alarmed even at a surplus of \$10,000,000 in the Treasury. "The revenue," said he, "must be reduced. The country will not bear an annual surplus of \$10,000,000 or \$15,000,000, when unnecessary. Its distribution would be a subject of perpetual contention." If we have not been misled by the figures purporting to emanate from authentic sources, the accumulations in the Treasury for the last six years have touched the enormous figures of \$336,838,104, distributed as follows: For 1881, \$100,069,405; 1882, \$145,543,311; 1883, \$132,879,444; 1884, \$393,626; 1885, \$63,468,771; and for 1886, up to the close of the fiscal year, 30th of June, \$90,825,847. The present accomplished Speaker of the House of Representatives is regarded as

A MAN OF EXTREME VIEWS on the tariff question, who might be a free trader if free trade were a practicable thing, and not an impracticable myth so long as we have \$15,000,000,000 of debt, and a pension roll. It was a terse and sagacious utterance of his before a Pennsylvania audience that laid bare the pith and substance of the "tariff plank" of the Democratic platform of 1884, and reconciled the discordant elements of the party to stand harmoniously upon it through a great and triumphant struggle, and now to turn, periodically, to practical bridge that bridge that spans over the flood. He said it means reform, but not revolution. In those few words he has crystallized the idea that underlies the some what involved phraseology of that ingenious paper, which, in a single breath, denounces the fostering of monopolies, the restriction of free trade, the incalculable policy of aid and discrimination to industries that need it—but qualifies the whole by limiting customs taxation to the exact requirements of an economical government. He lived in the historic Commonwealth beneath whose shade the accredited fathers of the American system have flourished, and that the post bellum Democratic party was a sort of composite concern, blended together by a common memory of oppression, injustice and wrong—that the two wings constituting that powerful party today had been educated in diverse schools, but had united after the war to rescue constitutional liberty from

THE CLUTCHES OF THE SPOILER—to bring order out of chaos—to rehabilitate the States and the people in all the sanctions of popular government, and bring peace and fellowship to a distracted country. He was wise enough to know, what certain thoughtless puff-balls do not seem to realize now, that the reopening of the old wounds would sever in twain the bond of fellowship, which, like the Siamese ligament, had for twenty years so happily bound the two wings of Democracy together, and bring certain destruction to both; and therefore, like the patriot and true Democrat he is, he accepted the Chicago tariff platform, not as the best exponent of his personal views, but as a compromise of conflicting opinions upon which all might honorably fraternize in harmony together. I am in favor of the tariff reform contemplated in that platform. The Democracy of Tennessee have been wise enough to allow the assembled wisdom of the national Democracy to formulate their policy on the subject, and to reaffirm at their late convention their unflinching loyalty to the tariff doctrines which have thus been trumpeted at the polls. For one, I regretted the failure of the Morrison bill for the revision of the tariff, and had I been a member of Congress I would have supported it, as it involves in my judgment no material departure from the principles of the Chicago platform. The only resource the government has to raise a steady, regular and absolutely adequate revenue, except by direct taxation, is by tariff duties, and all tariff duties upon imported fabrics, the like of which are manufactured here, must necessarily be

PROTECTIVE TO A CERTAIN DEGREE. Free trade on the other hand, must be followed by direct taxation, and this involves the necessary presence in the States of hundreds of pragmatic Federal officials connected with the assessment and collection of United States taxes, who take the money directly from the pockets of the people. The tariff, on

the contrary, "steals from our unconscionable purses," and to him who is obliged to buy largely of foreign fabrics taxed at the custom house under the present tariff it is always oppressive. In this respect the present war tariff, which it seems can never be reformed until the Senate and House of Representatives are reformed, is a monument of oppression more especially to the poor man and the farmer, inasmuch as it puts its heaviest burdens upon the prime necessities instead of the luxuries of life. Tariff taxation, however, was inaugurated in the time of Washington, and has been the permanent policy, and as the Chicago platform declares, "must continue to be." If direct Federal taxation, which can alone come as the accompaniment of free trade, or on account of some tremendous exigency of the government, could obtain for a single year, there would be blood upon the moon and discord in the air. For no form of

FEDERAL SURVEILLANCE over the people of the States, North or South, is more hateful than this. And yet, if all tariffs were abolished and free trade substituted, this would be the logical and inevitable sequence. To live within our means; to practice the virtues of industry and economy; to buy only what we need, and not what we merely want, is the true rule at last, and the best guaranty of a prosperous State. That was a lesson of economy as adroitly taught by the cynic philosopher of old. A gay and festive party of Athenian youth carried him into a bazar to see if they could tempt him to spend money for things he might take a fancy to but did not really need. There was everything around him to attract and demoralize a spendthrift—epicurean food, fashionable raiment, confections, toys, pictures and fantastic notions of every conceivable description. The old man looked at them all, and, lifting up his hands, exclaimed: "Oh! ye gods, how many things there are in this world Diogenes doesn't want!" But while it is true that the government at this time has only the alternative of a tariff or a direct tax from which to raise a revenue adequate beyond all peradventure to its ample support, yet there are more than twenty other sources from which revenue is derived, all of which together do not bring an amount adequate to the

WANTS OF THE GOVERNMENT, if the tariff incomes be excluded. The total revenue from all sources for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1885, was \$233,690,006 38. Of this sum, \$181,417,339 39 was raised by the tariff, and \$52,252,666 99 from the other sources referred to, one of which is the public lands, which contributed \$5,705,980 44. This latter, however, is irregular and unreliable, as a vast empire of the best of our public lands has been squandered in gifts and subsidies to the railroad corporations of the country. The total revenue from all these sources for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1886, was \$333,144,292. Of this amount, \$245,615,745 was expended in the necessary support of the government, in reducing the public debt under the regular plan and system adopted by the government, and in the extraordinary expenses demanded for river and harbor improvement, the building of custom houses, postoffices, courthouses and the like, leaving in the vaults of the Treasury at last, the excess over expenditures already referred to of \$90,528,547. I exhibit these figures to show that it is a great mistake to suppose that the whole surplus left in the Treasury every year comes of tariff incomes; and to show, also, that perhaps the whole of this last surplus of \$90,528,547, or much of it, might have been saved to the people either by a judicious

REVISION OF THE TARIFF itself, or a recasting of the schedule of internal revenue taxation, from which was derived for the last fiscal year the large sum of \$112,498,725 54. We hear it often said on the hustings that the tariff ought to be reduced to a revenue standard, and we see this refrain of speech injected into all our platforms. But who can define what a revenue standard means? If it means that the tariff ought to bring into the Treasury just such a sum, and no more, as when added to the incomes from all other sources will pay the annual expenses of the government as fixed and regulated by the written law, then we know where of we speak. For this includes the millions paid every month in discharge of the national debt and the pension rolls, the amounts of which can be approximately anticipated. But if intended to include the extraordinary expenses of the government, these are "unknown quantities," and cannot be anticipated. It is impossible in this vast country—now without a navy, without coast defenses, and without much else that it needs—to prognosticate what the next year's expenditures will be. There are a thousand drains upon the Treasury people know not of. Just think of it! There were near 18,000 bills introduced into the last Congress, at least 10,000 of which were bills asking for money out of the Treasury, either for some public improvement of a local nature, of special interest to the champion of each bill, or private pension or the like. We do know, however, that it requires \$3 many millions to defray the

ACTUAL STATUTORY EXPENSES of running the government. We know how much of the interest bearing debt will mature and must be paid. We know to a dollar how much to appropriate to the pensioners now on the roll. Further than this the words "revenue standard" is a myth; for we do not know what extraordinary expenses will be demanded for the next year, and therefore no accurate budget can be calculated, and deduction every session is necessary. But we do know that, after all these drains upon the Treasury, our annual surplus, averaging one hundred millions of money, all coming directly or indirectly from the pockets of the people, is an oppression, and should make haste to redress. But what are we going to do about it? The tariff cannot be modified now—or, perhaps, for years—as the Democrats are divided among themselves and the Senate is Republican. The resolution passed through Congress the other day demands that all surplus revenues belong to the public creditor. That, in the abstract, is true and just. But is it practicable under the regulation adopted by the government for the gradual extinguishment of the public debt to apply the whole corpus of these excesses of revenue to that purpose? Let us remember that estimates are regularly made for every fiscal year, and appropriations follow accordingly. These appropriations contain the necessary funds

TO PAY THE DEBT or the interest maturing during that fiscal year, which is regularly called in and paid. On the last of November, 1885, the interest bearing debt of the United States was \$1,200,778,102. Accrued interest on that day was \$9,595,948 10. The debt matured at that

date and accrued interest not yet presented was \$9,953,689 76. The debt bearing no interest at all was \$574,012,555 88. For the year ending June 30, 1886, there was a reduction of \$36,097,766 25. Of the entire debt bearing interest the sum of \$408,814,012 will fall due by or before the close of this century. Senator Beck said in a late speech that only \$144,000,000 of the debt could be paid off before September, 1891, and for that there is \$244,000,000 lying idle in the Treasury. About all the chance of the debt is in the 4 per cent, and does not fall due until the year 1907. Whatever may be said for or against the present banking system, it has furnished us a currency that is instantly convertible into the precious metals at the custom house. These bank notes are operated upon a deposit of United States bonds as a security to note holders and depositors. All the bonds of the government are payable at the pleasure of the government on a day certain, and of all the bonds only \$11,772,950 are held abroad. There have been seen that the surplus revenues accrued for six years up to 30th June, 18-6, amounted to the large sum of \$636,838,104. Now, suppose this resolution that all surplus revenues be on to the public creditors had passed six years ago and in pursuance of it the Secretary of the Treasury had called in the bonds to that amount, including those deposited by

THE NATIONAL BANKS, what would have been its effect upon the business of the country? The currency would have suffered a contraction to the extent of the issues of the banks, amounting to between three and four hundred millions, and it requires no great financier to foresee the collapse that would have followed. I am no friend of that iniquitous legislation by which the bulk of our public debt was metamorphosed into gold interest bearing securities in positive violation of the original contract; but we must take the situation as it is. The public debt is absolutely secure. The surplus revenues, sinking funds, every necessary appliance is provided for its smooth and gradual extinction without embarrassment to the government, the creditor or the currency of the country. The decadence of the national banks will be gradual and non-fatal. A financial conclusion will follow if things go on according to the sagacious programme formulated by the best financial minds of the country. So that in arriving at a proper solution of these questions:

"A little circumspection, my lord, is good, as well for empire as for men." Then, should the "do" done with this enormous surplus from year to year. Well, I say, if it can be done consistently with the considerations I have presented, let it all go to the public creditor. If only a part of it, under the plans of the government, can go that way, let that part go. But out of the balance let us carve out some way not obnoxious to the organic law an endowment to the States for the purposes of free school education for the poor, and thus go back to the

FOUNTAINS OF DEMOCRACY, the rock of Meribah, first stricken by Thomas Jefferson himself, who, in December, 1806, recommended to Congress even when the country was groaning with debt, to apply not only the surplus in the Treasury, but all surplus in the process of accumulation, and went further than either of the bills now before Congress by recommending that the constitution be so amended as to make the education of the people a permanent care of the Federal Government. It was under the inspiration of this grand old patriarch that a committee of Congress, on the 27th of February, 1806, recommended national aid to education as follows: Your committee is of opinion that it ought to be a primary object with the general government to encourage and promote education in every part of the Union, so far as the same can be done consistent with the general policy of the nation, and so far as not to infringe the municipal regulations that are or may be adopted by the respective States on this subject. It was in the light of these and scores of other precedents and examples that Chief Justice Waite considered this question in 1880, when he put it thus: "Does Congress possess the constitutional power not to control, but to contribute to the education of the people of the States? If doubts were entertained as to the existence of such power, in any unqualified sense, it might be concluded that the case of

THE COLORED POPULATION is surrounded by peculiar circumstances that take it out of the influence of the general rule." "But, fortunately," he continues, "the question, even as it stands, is not a new one, presented now for the first time to be decided. The laws of the United States present innumerable precedents in which Congress has exercised the power to contribute toward the general education of citizens of the new States, and in no instance has the constitutional right to do so been questioned." My position upon this question is well understood. As a member of the Legislature from this county in early life, the first speech I ever made in that body was in favor of national aid to education in the States, and \$40,000 came to one of our colleges as the result of legislative action at that time. I followed Jefferson then and I follow him now. I am in favor of it in the shape in which it can come, and in favor of just as much as the Treasury can spare. If the Blair bill, so called, is "a sentiment" since the Morrison resolution was not a practical question," now as some politicians say, then let it come from the proceeds of the public lands. I have no serious objection to that old Whig doctrine. I only fear the annual sales will not yield enough. It comes out of the same surplus at last. The government claims it as a source of revenue, but does not keep separate pouches for its revenue as they come in. They are all mixed and laid away in the Treasury vaults together—and the incomes from lands is just as much an indispensable part thereof as internal revenues or tariff incomes. If the Blair bill is passed, the lands donated to all the States in eight annual distributions should be given to Tennessee alone, it would be but a scant restitution of the tremendous losses her people suffered by the events of the war—the wrongs and exactions incident to carpet bag rule after the war—and the consequent burdens they are bearing so bravely today. With my contrite apology for extending this letter to such a length, I have the honor to be your obliged and obedient servant.

JOHN L. T. SNEED.
Memphis, September 15, 1886.

A MISUNDERSTANDING.
"Will you take our regular dinner, or will you dine a la carte?"
Said the waiter to a stranger.
But the other guest asked:
The patron flushed with anger,
And toward the door did start;
"Am no host," he shouted,
And set off by the cart."

LAKES OF KILLARNEY.

THE BEAUTIFUL LEGEND OF
THE FAIRY WELL.Fantastic Shapes Traced In the
Purple On the Horizon—Ex-
quisite Tints of Color.

When Lord Palmerston spent a brief holiday in Ireland his host apologized for the rain (which rained every day) as a shower; and twenty years after, in writing to Lord Cairnes, Lord Palmerston added: "P. S. Is that shower over yet?" The shower continues still, with twenty years added to the original score, and to see fair Erin a sight it must be visited in mackintosh. Thus equipped, the gentle dews of heaven may be defied, as they fall from a mild gray sky, laced here and there with a stray sunbeam. Immediately on reaching Killarney the traveler becomes absorbed in the great hotel system, which is the same in Paris, Geneva, Munich, and probably in every corner of the habitable globe. A man is shut out ten miles off in Tralee, but the table d'hôte is conducted on the same safe principles as if it were in London. The shaggy corner boys lounge about the seats in Killarney the same as in Dublin, but the spruce waiters of the great hotels do their work in the last fashion of Italy or Hamburg; and the host, situated in the first position to catch the first morning rays upon the unruffled luster of the lake, is as vast a pile of dollars as energy and capital can make it. The lake itself differs from the great continental waters in many particulars. Those of pure cobalt take the place of the striking yellow and strong high lights of foreign lands. There is no sparkle in the sunshine; the slow, calm movement of the light travels over the vast and plummy mountains as if the side of a lantern were opened and shut, not disclosing a wide slope of fertile green or purple heather, now the thick rounded growth of trees, of a brilliant emerald; or as the light falls on the hill tops, discovering the heights of purple slate and gray stone, which wall in a foreground of exquisitely humid myrtle green, every changing color of green and blue, and the waters of the lake, which are the waters of Killarney. The tint of gray, dear to Sir Edwin Landseer, spreads over the sky, opening on pale transparent azure, indicative of serene heights above. The hilly distances retreat copy into the background, unlike foreign mountains, which are cut in by bright heights, and the landscape is a vast, soft, and dreamy scene.

It is said that, once in seven years, in the dew of a morning, the great O'Donoghue rises from his lair under the depths, and, drawn by milk white couriers, drives over these shining gulfs to a cave, where old men become young again if they daily light upon this spot. Once upon a time, too, all the lake was a green valley, and the hills were a vast plain. The wall was closed by a large gray stone, and the condition by which it was held decreed that no one—maid, wife or widow—should leave the spring unsealed at sunset. A girl, due at the trysting place, forgot to close the well; and as the sun set the water rose and swelled forth so abundantly that not only the maiden and her lover, but all the township, was destroyed, and melted away under the fairy tempest. But at evening, once every seven years or so, pinnacles and battlements rise from the waves; for one brief minute the lower class of sweethearts to his breast, the aim of the spinning wheel and the loom of domestic life from the drowned settlement, till in another instant all is swept away over their radiant waters close again over their secret. These and scores of other legends people the lakes and their surrounding hills, side by side with fourteenth century chivalry and watercoloring, and the heart of the traveler is borne back to the olden times, and the heart of the traveler is borne back to the olden times, and the heart of the traveler is borne back to the olden times.

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